

Message Text

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JOINT EMBASSY/USIS MESSAGE

ATHENS FOR RTDO

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP MO
SUBJECT: 27TH CASABLANCA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR: OVERALL
ASSESSMENT, IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

REF: (A) CASABLANCA 464, (B) CASABLANCA 512, (C) CASABLANCA 503

1. SUMMARY. THE 27TH CASABLANCA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR CLOSED SUNDAY, MAY 15, AFTER 18 DAYS DURING WHICH APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION PEOPLE VISITED US PAVILION. OUR PAVILION WAS AWARDED A BRONZE MEDAL, THE FIRST TIME WE HAVE WON A MEDAL IN THE CASABLANCA FAIR. OUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS FAIR WAS VALID, AS A REFLECTION BOTH OF OUR INCREASINGLY CLOSE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL RELATIONS, AND OF OUR DESIRE TO MAINTAIN OUR POSITION AS MOROCCO'S SECOND SUPPLIER. MOROCCANS' EXPECTATIONS FOR US PARTICIPATION WERE MORE THAN FULFILLED. WE RECOMMEND US PARTICIPATION IN 1979 FAIR. END SUMMARY.
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2. THE 27TH CASABLANCA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR CLOSED SUNDAY, MAY 15, AFTER 18 DAYS DURING WHICH ABOUT ONE MILLION PEOPLE VISITED THE US PAVILION, WHICH WON A BRONZE MEDAL. RESPONSE OF OFFICIAL VISITORS, PUBLIC AND MEDIA WAS ENTHUSIASTIC, WITH NUMEROUS FLATTERING COMMENTS AND HEAVY MEDIA COVERAGE.

3. ON OPENING DAY APRIL 28, AMBASSADOR LED PRIME MINISTER AHMED OSMAN AND HIS ENTOURAGE ON TOUR OF ENTIRE US PAVILION INCLUDING SPECIAL USIS EXHIBIT ON 200 YEARS OF US-MOROCCAN FRIENDSHIP, MEMBERS OF PRIME MINISTER'S ENTOURAGE INCLUDED MINISTER OF COMMERCE ABDELLATIF GHISSASSI, MINISTER OF FINANCE ABDEL KADER BENSLIMANE, MINISTER OF COOPERATION HADOU ECHIGUER, MINISTER OF INFORMATION TAIBI BENHIMA, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DR. AHMED LARAKI, MINISTER OF PTT DRISS BEN AOMAR EL ALAMI, MINISTER OF TOURISM HASSAN ZEMMOURI, MINISTER OF LABOR LARBI EL KHATTABI, MINISTER OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION BOUAMOND, AND MINISTER OF JUSTICE EL KISSI. CASABLANCA GOVERNOR FIZZAZI AND PREFECTURE NOTABLES WERE ALSO IN ATTENDANCE. CROWN PRINCE MADE COMPLETE TOUR OF US PAVILION MORNING MAY 13 WHILE VISITING FAIR, STOPPING AT VARIOUS COMMERCIAL STANDS AND USIS EXHIBIT AND ACCEPTING GIFT OF US BICENTENNIAL COMMEMORATIVE COINS.

4. 1977 IS FIRST TIME THAT A US PAVILION HAS BEEN AWARDED A MEDAL AT THE CASABLANCA INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR ALTHOUGH PAVILION HAD TO COMPETE WITH THOSE ENJOYING MUCH LARGER BUDGETS. GOLD MEDALS WENT TO SAUDI ARABIA AND FRANCE. THE PLO GOT SPECIAL GOLD MEDAL. CONSUL GENERAL MONJO ACCEPTED BRONZE MEDAL ON BEHALF US GOVERNMENT FROM GOVERNOR FIZZAZI AT RECEPTION EVENING OF CLOSING DAY.

5. WE WILL BE FOLLOWING WITH MESSAGE DETAILING COMMERCIAL UNCLASSIFIED

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RESULTS OF FAIR, AS SOON AS ALL END-OF-SHOW REPORTS (FORM DIB-411P) HAVE BEEN COMPLETED AND SIGNED BY EXHIBITORS. EXHIBITORS STATED RESULTS EXCEEDED THEIR EXPECTATIONS.

6. OUR PARTICIPATION IN 1977 CASABLANCA FAIR WAS DETERMINED BY COMBINATION OF POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL FACTORS. AS WE STATED IN LETTER SOLICITING PARTICIPATION, THE GOM QUOTE INDICATED THAT IT VIEWS OUR PARTICIPATION AS A REFLECTION OF THE IMPORTANCE WE ATTACH TO THE RELATIONSHIP. UNQUOTE. FROM COMMENTS MADE TO ME PERSONALLY AS WELL AS TO DUSEX AND CONGEN OFFICERS, I BELIEVE OUR PARTICIPATION, IN MAKING BOTH MAJOR ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL AND HIGHLY SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC AFFAIRS IMPACT, MORE THAN FULFILLED MOROCCANS' EXPECTATIONS. CLEARLY, FROM COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM SENIOR OFFICIALS AND BRONZE MEDAL (IN COMPETITION WITH 34 NATIONAL PAVILIONS), GOM HAS BEEN PLEASED WITH OUR PARTICIPATION. PRIME MINISTER OSMAN WENT OUT OF HIS WAY TO CONGRATULATE

AMBASSADOR ON OUR ATTRACTIVE, TASTEFUL PAVILION, NOTING PARTICULARLY OUR INITIATIVE TO INCLUDE SUCH AN IMPORTANT CULTURAL EXHIBIT MARKING 200 YEARS OF US-MOROCCAN RELATIONS. ON ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL SIDE, WE FOUND GREATER WILLINGNESS ON THE PART OF US FIRMS TO PARTICIPATE THAN HAD BEEN THE CASE IN EARLIER FAIRS. ULTIMATELY, FORD HAD TO TAKE SEPARATE PAVILION CONSTRUCTED IN FORMER PARKING LOT SINCE WE WERE UNABLE TO OFFER LARGE SPACE THEY WANTED. EVEN SO WITH PAVILION FULL WE HAD TO LIMIT TO TOKEN PARTICIPATION SOME OF LATE COMERS WISHING TO BE REPRESENTED. HENCE, GIVEN DEGREE OF INTEREST ON PART OF FIRMS, WE FEEL FAIR WAS SOLIDLY BASED ON ECONOMIC/COMMERCIAL GROUNDS.

7. THE 1979 FAIR: GIVEN EXCELLENT RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND MOROCCO, AND IN VIEW SUCCESS OF US PAVILION IN 1977 FAIR, WE RECOMMEND US PARTICIPATION IN NEXT BIENNIAL
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FAIR IN 1979, WHETHER HELD AT NEW FAIRGROUNDS ON OUTSKIRTS CASABLANCA (AS AUTHORITIES HOPE), OR IN OLD LOCATION (QUITE LIKELY, IN OUR OPINION). FOR ABOVE REASONS, AND AS NOTED REF C, WE BELIEVE US PARTICIPATION SHOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL WITH SUFFICIENT ADDITIONAL SPACE (ENCLOSED AND OPEN) TO MEET DEMAND. OUR SMALL STAND IN THE GRAND PALAIS IN 1973 EVOKED, AND STILL EVOKES, COMMENTS THAT FOR A LARGE COUNTRY TO PARTICIPATE IN MINIMAL MANNER WAS QUOTE WORSE THAN NOTHING .UNQUOTE. WE ALSO URGE THAT IN 1979 USIS WILL AGAIN PROVIDE AN ATTRACTIVE EXHIBIT--ONE TAILORED FOR MOROCCO--AS WAS SUCCESSFULLY THE CASE THIS YEAR.ANDERSON

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